

## Message Text

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41-L

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6397

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 0090

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CO

SUBJECT: FURTHER COMMENTS ON US AND COLOMBIA

REF A) BOGOTA 11387 B) BOGOTA 0057

1. ON JAN 3 THE AMBASSADOR HAD A LONG CONVERSATION WITH DR HECTOR CHARRY SAMPER, PRESIDENT OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES AND MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISORY COMMISSION. CHARRY HAD JUST RETURNED FROM SPENDING TWO DAYS WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ IN THE ISLAS DE RASARIO WHERE THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN SPENDING THE HOLIDAYS.

2. IN HIS CONVERSATION CHARRY MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. THE GOC WILL EVENTUALLY NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH CUBA, BUT WILL DO SO IN STAGES, FIRST COMMERCIAL RELATIONS AND LATER DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. IT MAY WELL DO SO HOWEVER BEFORE THE BUENOS AIRES MEETING.

B. THE ADVISORY COMMISSION WHICH CONVENES JAN 13 TO ADVISE THE GOC ON THE CUBAN RELATIONS ISSUE REFLECTS A WIDE VARIETY OF VIEWS. WHAT THE GOC WANTS IS TO HEAR THE VIEWS, AND THEN IT WILL FEEL FREE TO BE PREPARED TO MOVE AS IT THINKS CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE.

C. THE FAILURE OF THE QUITO MEETING TO LIFT SANCTIONS HAD A VERY DEEP AND ADVERSE IMPACT IN COLOMBIA. ALTHOUGH COLOMBIANS DID NOT SHOW IT OR SAY MUCH ABOUT IT "WE DID NOT DEBATE IT IN CONGRESS AS  
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DID THE VENEZUELAN" THE FEELING WAS THAT COLOMBIA HAD RECEIVED AN INTERNATIONAL DEFEAT. "IT WAS LIKE A BLOW TO THE STOMACH". THE LOPEZ GOVERNMENT FELT ESPECIALLY HUMILIATED BECAUSE IT CAME AT A TIME WHEN THE ECONOMIC CRISIS WAS ALSO SEVERE AND DOMESTIC CRITICISM OF THE ADMINISTRATION AT A PEAK.

D. HAVING BEEN DEFEATED AT QUITO, COLOMBIA WAS NOT GOING TO BUENOS AIRES WITH ANY PROPOSAL OR ANY INTENTION OF TAKING AN INITIATIVE. IT DARED NOT RISK A SECOND DEFEAT.

E. COLOMBIANS FELT A GREAT DEAL OF PERPLEXITY ABOUT THE US AND CONSIDERABLE DISENCHANTMENT. IT DOES NOT KNOW WHAT POLICY THE US IS REALLY FOLLOWING, AND IT HAS LITTLE SENSE OF BEING HOLD IN ANY PARTICULAR REGARD BY THE US. THE INTER-AMERICAN SITUATION WAS AMORPHOUS AND FLUID, AND NO ONE SEEMED TO BE LEADING.

F. REFERRING TO THE UPI STORIES OUT OF WASHINGTON CONCERNING A TRIP TO LA BY THE SECRETARY, CHARRY NOTED THAT COLOMBIA WAS NOT INCLUDED. IF SECRETARY KISSINGER DOES NOT VISIT COLOMBIA, HE SAID, THE REACTION WILL BE BAD AND SEVERE--WORSE THAN YOU THINK". THE LOPEZ ADMINISTRATION WILL FEEL PARTICULARLY REBUFFED AND EMBARRASSED.

G. COLOMBIA DISAGREES WITH -AND FEARS-THE TACTIC OF TRYING TO ORGANIZE A COMMON LATIN AMERICAN FRONT TO DEAL WITH THE US. THIS IS UNNECESSARY AND DANGEROUS. COLOMBIA WANTS VERY MUCH TO SEE A STRONG INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM, INSTITUTIONALIZED AND VITAL. IT PARTICULARLY FAVORS A STRONG COLLECTIVE SECURITY MECHANISM, I.E. THE RIO TREATY. CHARRY POINTED TO POTENTIAL CONFLICT WITH VENEZUELA AS AN EXAMPLE OF WHY A HEMISPHERE SYSTEM WAS IMPORTANT TO THE PEACE OF THE REGION.

H. WHAT IS NEEDED IS SOME GREAT ACT OR POLITICAL GESTURE TO VITALIZE AND ENERGIZE THE SYSTEM.

3. COMMENT. CHARRY'S COMMENTS ARE ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE THAT THERE ARE SOME COMMONLY HELD VIEWS REGARDING US-COLOMBIAN RELATIONS: DEEP HURT AND EMBARRASSMENT OVER THE RESULTS OF THE QUITO MEETING--IT STILL SMARTS  
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PUZZLEMENT ABOUT WHAT THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US OUGHT TO BE AND A FEELING OF BEING REBUFFED OR DISREGARDED BY THE US A STRONG DESIRE TO AVOID POLARIZATIONS AND TO STRENGTHEN THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM.  
VAKY

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NNN

\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

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